

**RED-LINED VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

On page 20, line 4, please insert the following new paragraph.

-- Methods are provided for screening a patient for cancer or precancer by detecting the presence of nucleic acid fragments that are longer than nucleic acid fragments expected to be present in a sample obtained from a healthy individual. In one embodiment, a positive screen for cancer or precancer is identified when a patient tissue or body fluid sample comprising exfoliated cells or cellular debris contains an amount of nucleic acid of a length greater than about 200 base pairs that exceeds a predetermined amount. --

**RED-LINED VERSION OF THE CLAIMS SHOWING THE CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

7. (Amended) A method for screening a patient for cancer or precancer, the method comprising the step of

detecting in a patient tissue or body fluid sample comprising exfoliated cells a nucleic acid fragment of a length that is greater than a length of a nucleic acid [not] expected to be present in said sample in a healthy patient;

the presence of said fragment being a positive screen for cancer or precancer.

8. (New) A method for screening a patient for cancer or precancer, the method comprising the steps of:

determining in a patient tissue or body fluid sample comprising exfoliated cells or cellular debris whether an amount of a nucleic acid greater than 200 base pairs in length exceeds a predetermined amount;

identifying a positive screen for cancer or precancer if said amount does exceed said predetermined amount.

9. (New) A method for screening a patient for cancer or precancer, the method comprising the steps of:

determining in a patient tissue or body fluid sample comprising exfoliated cells or cellular debris a first amount of long nucleic acid of a length greater than 200 base pairs;

determining in said sample a second amount of nucleic acid of a length less than said long nucleic acid;

determining a ratio between said first amount and said second amount; and identifying a positive screen for cancer or precancer if said ratio exceeds a

threshold ratio for patients who do not have cancer or precancer.